

1. A method of transmitting images from a producer device to a consumer device, comprising at the producer device:
  - determining that a digital bitmap image is larger in size than a threshold;
  - converting the digital bitmap image to an analog image; and
  - sending the analog image to the consumer device.
2. The method according to claim 1, further comprising sending a control message to the consumer device to switch from a digital input to an analog input to receive the analog image.
3. The method according to claim 2, further comprising sending a control message to the consumer device to switch from the analog input back to the digital input to receive digital images after the analog image has been sent.
4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the digital input comprises an IEEE 1394 digital input.
5. The method according to claim 2, wherein the control message comprises an audio video control (AVC) command.
6. The method according to claim 3, wherein the control messages comprise audio video control (AVC) commands.
7. The method according to claim 1, wherein the digital bitmap image comprises a graphical user interface (GUI) image.
8. The method according to claim 1, wherein the digital bitmap image comprises a television program guide image.

1 9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the consumer device comprises  
2 a digital television.

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4 10. The method according to claim 1, wherein the producer device comprises  
5 a television set-top box.

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7 11. The method according to claim 1, further comprising sending digital bitmap  
8 images to a digital input in the consumer device when the digital bitmap images  
9 are smaller than the threshold.

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11 12. The method according to claim 11, wherein the digital images are sent using  
12 EIA775a protocol over an IEEE 1394 digital connection.

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14 13. The method according to claim 1, wherein the analog image is sent as one  
15 of an NTSC and PAL format analog image.

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17 14. An electronic storage medium storing instructions which, when executed on  
18 a programmed processor, carry out method according to claim 1.  
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1        15.    A method of transmitting images from a producer device to a consumer  
2        device, comprising at the producer device:

3                determining if a digital bitmap image is larger in size than a threshold and  
4        if the digital bitmap image is larger is size than the threshold:

5                converting the digital bitmap image to an analog image;

6                sending a control message as an audio video control (AVC)  
7        command to the consumer device to switch from a digital input to an analog  
8        input to receive the analog image;

9                sending the analog image to the consumer device as an overlay on  
10        an analog television signal; and

11        if the digital bitmap image is not larger is size than the threshold:

12                sending the digital images using EIA775a protocol over an IEEE 1394  
13        digital connection.

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15        16.    The method according to claim 15, further comprising sending a control  
16        message to the consumer device to switch from the analog input back to the digital  
17        input to receive digital images after the analog image has been sent.

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19        17.    The method according to claim 15, wherein the digital bitmap image  
20        comprises a graphical user interface (GUI) image.

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22        18.    The method according to claim 15, wherein the digital bitmap image  
23        comprises a television program guide image.

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25        19.    The method according to claim 15, wherein the consumer device comprises  
26        a digital television.

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28        20.    The method according to claim 15, wherein the producer device comprises  
29        a television set-top box.  
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1 21. The method according to claim 15, wherein the analog image is sent as one  
2 of an NTSC and PAL format analog image.

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4 22. An electronic storage medium storing instructions which, when executed on  
5 a programmed processor, carry out method according to claim 15.  
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1       23.    A method of transmitting images from a television set-top box to a digital  
2 television, comprising at the television set-top box:

3           determining if a digital bitmap image is larger in size than a threshold and  
4 if the digital bitmap image is larger is size than the threshold:

5                 converting the digital bitmap image to an analog image;

6                 sending a control message as an audio video control (AVC)  
7 command to the digital television to switch from a digital input to an analog  
8 input to receive the analog image;

9                 sending the analog image to the digital television; and

10 if the digital bitmap image is not larger is size than the threshold:

11                 sending the digital images using EIA775a protocol over an IEEE 1394  
12 digital connection.

13  
14       24.    The method according to claim 23, wherein the digital bitmap image  
15 comprises one of a graphical user interface (GUI) image and a television program  
16 guide image.

17  
18       25.    The method according to claim 23, wherein the analog image is sent as one  
19 of an NTSC and PAL format analog image.  
20  
21

1       26.    A producer device, comprising:  
2            means for receiving digital content containing a bitmap image;  
3            means for determining a size of the bitmap image;  
4            means for converting the bitmap image to an analog representation in the  
5    event the size of the bitmap image exceeds a threshold;  
6            a digital output circuit for sending digital information to a consumer device;  
7    and  
8            an analog output circuit for sending the analog representation to the  
9    consumer device.

10  
11       27.    The apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising means for sending  
12    a control message to the consumer device to switch from a digital input to an  
13    analog input to receive the analog image.

14  
15       28.    The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the digital output circuit  
16    comprises an IEEE 1394 digital interface.

17  
18       29.    The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the control message  
19    comprises an audio video control (AVC) command.

20  
21       30.    The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the digital bitmap image  
22    comprises one of a graphical user interface (GUI) image and a television program  
23    guide image.

24  
25       31.    The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the consumer device  
26    comprises a digital television.

27  
28       32.    The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the producer device  
29    comprises a television set-top box.

1 33. The apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising sending digital  
2 bitmap images to a digital input in the consumer device when the digital bitmap  
3 images are smaller than the threshold.

4  
5 34. The apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the digital images are sent  
6 using EIA775a protocol over an IEEE 1394 digital connection.

7  
8 35. The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the analog image is sent as  
9 one of an NTSC and PAL format analog image.

10  
11 36. The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the means for determining the  
12 size comprises a programmed processor.